

**AUBREY
BEARDSLEY**

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Aubrey Beardsley by Robert Ross

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ROBERT ROSS

**AUBREY
BEARDSLEY**



**::: AUBREY :::
BEARDSLEY**

BY ROBERT ROSS
WITH SIXTEEN FULL-PAGE
ILLUSTRATIONS AND A
REVISED ICONOGRAPHY
BY AYMER VALLANCE

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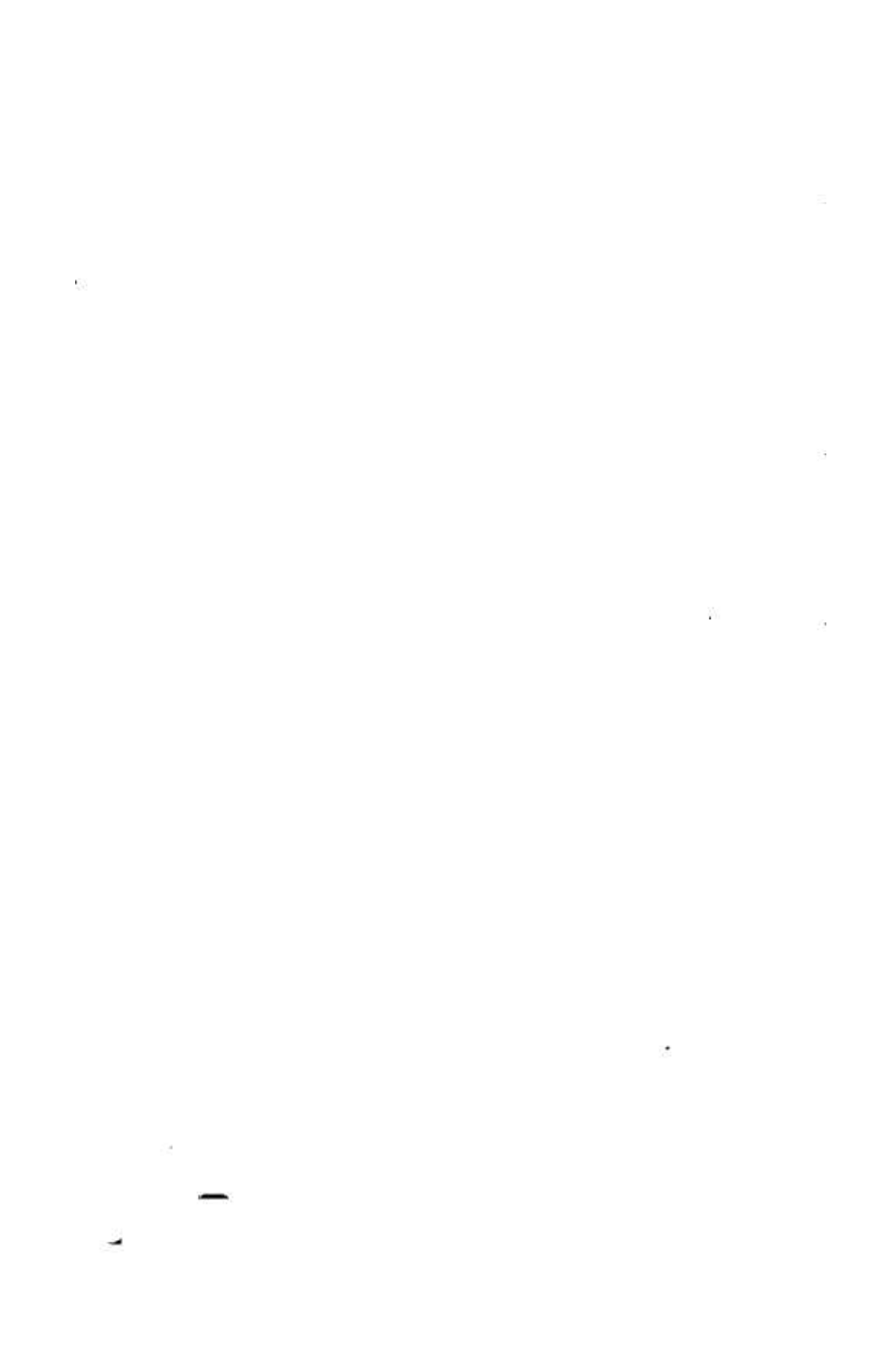
TO

SIR COLERIDGE ARTHUR FITZROY KENNARD,
BART.

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AUBREY BEARDSLEY



AUBREY BEARDSLEY

AUBREY BEARDSLEY was born on August 21st, 1872, at Brighton. He was a quiet, reserved child, caring little for lessons, though from an early age he shewed an aptitude for drawing. He began his education at a Kindergarten. He was seven years old when the first symptoms of delicacy appeared, and he was sent to a preparatory school at Hurstpierpoint, where he was remarkable for his courage and extreme reserve. Threatened with tuberculosis, he was moved for his health to Epsom in 1881. In March 1883 his family settled in London, and Beardsley made his first public appearance as an infant musical phenomenon, playing at concerts in company with his sister. He had a great knowledge of music, and always spoke dogmatically on a subject, the only one he used to say, of which he knew anything. He became attracted at this time by Miss Kate Greenaway's picture

Aubrey Beardsley

books, and started illuminating menus and invitation cards with coloured chalks, making by this means quite considerable sums for a child.

In August 1884 he and his sister were sent back to Brighton, where they resided with an old aunt. Their lives were lonely, and Beardsley developed a taste for reading of a rather serious kind—the histories of Freeman and Greene being his favourite works. He could not remain a student without creating, so he started a history of the Armada! In November of the same year he was sent to the Brighton Grammar School as a day boy, becoming a boarder in January 1885. He was a great favourite with Mr King, the house-master, who encouraged his tastes for reading and drawing by giving him the use of a sitting-room and the run of a library. This was one of the first pieces of luck that attended Beardsley throughout life. The head-master, Mr Marshall, I am told, would hold him up as an example to the other boys, on account of his industry. His caricatures of the masters were fully appreciated by them, a rare occurrence in the lives of artists. He cultivated besides a talent for acting, and would often